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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

NATIONAL LINKS CONVENTION

JUNE 23, 1951

PITTSBURGH, PA.

President's Report
National Links Convention
June 23, 1951
Pittsburgh, Pa.

In Philadelphia on June 4, 1949 when the organization "The National Links" was born, we adopted as our purpose "To bring together outstanding women in various sections of our country for a three fold purpose namely civic, inter-cultural and social."

In this report I shall summarize the things which have been accomplished within the organization and in carrying out our three fold objectives for the past 10 years.

Organization

- Incorporation - We have become an incorporated body with charters for each chapter. This was due to the fine work of Christine Howell and her committee.

- Membership - Because the majority vote of our last conference was for expansion, we have now 42 Chapters; instead of our original 14. We are exactly three times as large and Lillian Brown and the Membership Committee have done an excellent job in bringing us so many fine women from various parts of our country.

- Constitution - Our constitution has been revised twice to meet the growing demands of a growing organization. Julia Delany and her committee are to be commended on the hard work necessary to complete this difficult assignment.

- Treasury - We have a substantial treasury due to the careful and efficient management of the National Treasurer Dorothy Reed. To me it is most commendable, that with our chapters more than doubled since last Conference, that our budget didn't double too.

- Records - Every new organization needs to keep accurate and complete records and we are proud to say that our Records are complete to the last detail - Thanks to the hard work of our three efficient secretaries, Ethel Lowry, Myrtle Manigault and Beatrice Butler.

In addition we have compiled records for posterity as follows:

- 1- History - Our competent National Historian Lillian Stanford has completed the outstanding job of compiling most of the Chapter's histories to date.
- 2- Handbook - Bernice Thomas and her committee have almost completed an excellent handbook for 1951-52 which will even contain the revised Constitution.
- 3- Scrapbook - We have amassed quite a storehouse of pictures, newspaper clippings etc. which are being preserved in a National Scrapbook by Elizabeth Anderson, who is to be commended for this fine collection.
- 4- Journal - Our dream of two years has at last come true with the first edition of our own magazine. This beautiful book is the result of ceaseless toil on the part of our National Journalist Claudine Lewis and her Committee.

- 5- Seal - We now have our own seal designed by Susan Lowry daughter-in-law of Ethel Lowry - This is an outstanding piece of work and one which symbolizes The Links perfectly as a chain of friendship around the world.
- 6- Song - We now have original music to our Links song thanks to the creative ability of Sallie Armstrong.

F - Insignia - Our bracelets have been revised too because of popular demand, and Margaret Hawkins has designed a most artistic smaller bracelet for those who prefer it.

G - Initiation Ritual - Letitia Rose has made our Initiation Ritual more beautiful and more impressive

H - Conferences - Philadelphia, Atlantic City, and now Pittsburg have all graciously extended to us their hospitality for our National Conferences and we are deeply appreciative of all of their kindness. Philadelphia, New York, Atlantic City and Baltimore have all been hostesses to the Executive Council and we are grateful for their kind hospitality

I - Program - One has but to read the many letters that come in telling about chapter activities or read the accounts in the National History of Chapter Activities to know just how popular our excellent program is. There are those who like the civic side and who stress this phase of it by engaging in every activity that is helpful to their community. There are those who like the Intercultural side and who do everything possible to create better understandings among all people. All chapters enjoy the social side, and the bonds of friendship seem stronger the longer the chapters work together. The Workshop is popular in some communities; others have done a grand job on Vigilance Committees as Blanche Sinkler will tell you. We expect to do a small part in getting scholarship and this year for some worthy student. Audry Butler will tell you more about this. All of these broad conceptions of our interrelationship with community life are due to the excellent program made for us by Daisy Lampkin and her Committee.

Not only as Chapters, but as individuals are we spurring ahead in fulfilling our pledge to serve our communities to the best of our abilities.

As I have given this report you can see that not one person but many, many, Links in all sections of our country have been busy planning and working tirelessly and unceasingly that our organization could grow in strength and attain the preeminent place in communities which it occupies today. We have to thank too, our chairman of publicity Jessie Vann who has given us prominent space in order that the public could read and learn about the work of the Links.

We have been blessed that since our 1949 Conference our chain of friendship has not been broken again by the death of any of our members and we rejoice that to Melanie Walker, Virginia Dabney and Theresa Moore have come new links of happiness.

We can but pray that God will give us strength and courage, both as chapters and individuals to go forth next year and do even better jobs than we have done up to the present - that we realize even more fully our great responsibility for sharing whatever talent we have - "not what we give but what we share - for the gift without the giver is bare."

Conclusion

Some of the happiest moments that I have experienced as National President

have come in my meetings with you of chapter presidents or chapters. No amount of correspondence can take the place of the Personal element and it has been a real joy to sit down with you and discuss your problems. Unfortunately I was not able to meet with all the chapters or all the presidents. I, however, chose those that were nearest geographically speaking and had most informative informal conferences with the chapter presidents of the northeastern area, the eastern area, the southern area, four Ohio Chapters, and the Indianapolis president. I knew then that the real spirit of Linkdom was secure forever.

The only recommendation I would like to make is that the next president be assigned a part time paid secretary. It was absolutely a physical impossibility for me to attend promptly to the great mass of correspondence that flooded me as the year went on and we grew like a snowball. When it was difficult to manage the personal correspondence of 18 chapters you can well imagine what the personal correspondence of 42 chapters plus 16 members of the executive council involved!! There has never been a week when there has been less than twenty-five letters to be personally answered. These were aside from the routine correspondence that our National Secretary handled which likewise has been very heavy, and she has done most efficiently an arduous job.

In achieving the above record, there have been as in all organizational efforts differences of opinion, misunderstandings, one or two minor crises and the conflict of many divergent philosophies. None of these I'm happy to say were of such magnitude that they stopped in any appreciable way our continuous march toward the achievement of our goal. None of which has broken down the essential bond of common interests that unites us all.

Our troubles this year came primarily from the inadequacy of the Constitution adopted at the last Convention. This constitution became woefully unable to withstand the problems posed by the fast expanding Links. The revision made by the Chairman and her Committee, utilizing the suggestions given by many of us as interested individuals, as well as committee members, the fine suggestions of the Policy Committee under the able chairmanship of Etta Phifer all have aided in developing the present revision sent to you for your consideration before the conference. It is sincerely hoped that if you have any further suggestions for the strengthening of our Constitution that they be given at this conference so that next year we can all start out with the assurance that our Constitution is as strong as possible.

May I further state in concluding this report that I think it most opportune to summarize the present status of our organization.

- 1- We have forty-two chapters extending from East to West, North to South with a membership of 700.
- 2- We have sound financial stability.
- 3- We have accomplished our three fold objectives through the media of our National Program and Planning.

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation and sincere thanks to those who have made this report possible and to thank you for your cooperation and loyalty.

The last thought that I would like to leave with you are these words - as expressed by the immortal Lincoln and worthy of emulation by us as Links. "With malice toward none, with charity for all with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right let us strive on to finish the work we are in."

Sarah S. Scott
National President